

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 333 754

FL 019 265

AUTHOR Alonso, Carmen M.
TITLE Improving Academic Achievement of ESOL Kindergarten Students Using a Centers Approach to Instruction.
PUB DATE May 91
NOTE 49p.; M.S. Practicum, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Cooperative Learning; Critical Thinking; *English (Second Language); Games; *Handwriting; *Independent Study; Individualized Instruction; Instructional Effectiveness; *Kindergarten; *Learning Centers (Classroom); Manipulative Materials; Primary Education; Second Language Instruction; Writing Instruction

ABSTRACT

A practicum tested the effectiveness of a learning-center approach in improving the overall academic achievement of kindergarten children who were speakers learners of English as a second language (ESL). The entire kindergarten class participated in the method, but only nine students were selected on the basis of their score on the Brigance Test. Four major instructional centers were used: handwriting; teacher-directed instruction; follow-up activities; and independent activities. The program used manipulative materials and game-like instructional situations, ESL teaching techniques, cooperative learning, and critical thinking skill development. Activity modification and parent-teacher conferences permitted individualized instruction. The nine students increased their overall achievement by a minimum of 10 points as measured by the Brigance Test. The approach is seen as effective and adaptable to other grade levels and subject areas. Appended materials include forms used in the study, a classroom floor plan, chart of center usage, and a comparison of pre- and post-test scores. A 15-item bibliography is included. (MSE)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED333754

**IMPROVING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
OF ESOL KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS
USING A CENTERS APPROACH TO INSTRUCTION**

by

Carmen M. Alonso

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A Practicum Report

**submitted to the Faculty of the Center for
the Advancement of Nova University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Science.**

**The abstract of this report may be placed in a
National Database System for reference.**

May 1991

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Alonso

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. When it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other professionals in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Signed: Guillermo M. Alonso
Student's Name

Table of Contents

	Page
Title Page	i
Abstract	ii
Authorship Statement	iii
Observer's Verification	iv
Table of Contents	v
Chapters	
I. Purpose	1
II. Research and Solution Strategy	7
III. Method	15
IV. Results	25
V. Recommendations	27
Reference List	29
Appendices	
Appendix A: Informal Pre-Implementation Survey	33
Appendix B: Pre/Post Test Instrument	35
Appendix C: Floor Plan of Classroom	37
Appendix D: Sample Centers Chart	39
Appendix E: Comparison of Pre/Post Test Scores	41

Abstract

Improving Achievement of ESOL Kindergarten Students
Using a Centers Approach to Instruction.
Alonso, Carmen M., 1991: Practicum Report, Nova
University,
The Center for the Advancement of Education.
Descriptors: English as a Second Language (ESOL)/
Language Play/ Early Childhood/

This practicum was developed to improve achievement of ESOL Kindergarten students. A centers approach to instruction was used in the kindergarten. Although the entire class participated, nine students were selected as the target group. The children were selected on the basis of their score on the Brigance Test. The program included four major instructional centers: Handwriting, teacher/directed instruction, follow-up activities, and an independent activity center. The program used manipulative materials and game-like instructional situations along with ESOL techniques, cooperative learning, and critical thinking skills. Individualized instruction was addressed through activity modification and parent-teacher conferences. Nine students increased their overall achievement by a minimum of ten points as measured by the Brigance Test. This exceeded the established criteria.

CHAPTER I

Purpose

This practicum was implemented in a public elementary school located in a densely populated low-income area. The residents of this area were mainly immigrants from Central and South America. Most families were in an economic transition period, relocating to other neighborhoods was common. This often meant students must change schools. This school setting, along with the lack of the English language, made it difficult for students to excel in their studies.

The school staff consisted of the following: one principal, one assistant principal, 54 classroom teachers, 16 special area teachers, one media specialist, three exceptional education teachers, one guidance counselor, five clerical workers, one school secretary, seven custodians, and 20 cafeteria workers.

The school was four years old. It was originally designed for approximately 800 students. The enrollment was constantly fluctuating due to the

mobility of the families in the neighborhood. During the 1988-89 school year, enrollment climbed to 1,360. Enrollment during this practicum stood at approximately 1,000. The student population was made up of 64 percent Hispanic, 26 percent Black and 10 percent White. Some first and second grade classrooms were doubled up, and there were two portables in use as classrooms.

The school had several programs which aided in the instructional process. The school had a Chapter One program. This program is federally funded and is designed to help students improve in reading and mathematics. Teachers and paraprofessionals worked with small groups to help the students. There was also a parental component to the program. The Parent Outreach Specialist made home contacts through telephone conversations or home visits. The specialist explained services available. There was a Compensatory Education Program which provides individual assistance for students in grades two through five. There was a fourth and fifth grade combination class for Alternative Education. This class provided a special environment for identified "at risk" students. There were "TEAM" classrooms for first, second, and third

grade. "TEAM," Teaching Enrichment Activities to Minorities, in which the minority student learns thinking skills and other background information. The school also had an extensive "ESOL" Program, English for Speakers of Other Languages. There were ESOL pull-out programs in which the student receives instruction in a classroom other than his/her own classroom. There was also the ESOL self-contained classroom in which all students were deficient in the English language.

There were seven kindergarten classes, five of which were ESOL self-contained. The writer was one of five ESOL self-contained kindergarten classroom teachers. Although students were constantly moving away, new entries maintained the class size between 24 and 26 students. The target group received art instruction with one of the art teachers for 30 minutes every other week and music with one of the music teachers for 30 minutes weekly. Spanish instruction was received from one of the Spanish teachers for 30 minutes daily. The reading program used was the newly state-adopted Heath reading program. This program focused on a whole language approach to reading. Mathematics was instructed using the Harcourt, Brace

and Jovanovich series for kindergarten, Mathematics Today. The Peabody Language Development System was used for language enrichment. The target group for this practicum consisted of nine students who scored lower than 77.5 on the Brigance pretest.

Students entering kindergarten are faced with a formal curriculum which they are to master before entering first grade. The traditional kindergarten required attendance only a few hours a day. Today, a kindergartner spends anywhere from five to six hours in school. A typical traditional kindergarten classroom included a housekeeping corner, paints and brushes, blocks, clay, and puzzles. Even though these materials have educational value, they were removed. Many kindergarten classrooms have dismissed the attributes of using these materials in lieu of books, workbooks, dittos, and pencil and paper tasks. The pressures facing today's kindergarten student seem to dictate the creation of a structured learning environment.

The problem exists that kindergarten students cannot efficiently learn in a structured classroom. These students require an environment that is more conducive to learning for their developmental level. A true early childhood classroom needs to allow students

to learn through play. Play is the method through which kindergarten children learn best (Lindberg & Swedlow, 1985). Using a well guided approach, play can support and promote development in social skills, intellectual thinking, and dealing with emotions and feelings.

This was very clearly present with the students the writer teaches. School records indicated that 90 percent of students had no preschool experience, and 85 percent of the kindergartners did not speak English. The kindergarten students had difficulty concentrating on tasks and expressing themselves verbally. Evidence of the problem existed in the target group's low Brigance pretest scores. The pretest included assessment in personal data response, color recognition, picture vocabulary, visual discrimination, visual motor skills, gross motor skills, counting, identification of body parts, following verbal directions, numeral comprehension, printing personal data, syntax, and fluency.

It was necessary to test the students in two sittings. This allowed the students to rest and be able to concentrate on the questions. Even though all the students were assessed in their native language,

85 percent scored low on the written items as well as on the verbal and auditory response items.

Further evidence was present in an informal survey of the kindergarten teachers at the target school (Appendix A:33). The teachers were asked to rate their group on overall performance on the Brigance test on a scale of low, medium and high. Five out of seven teachers reported the students low and the remaining two reported their groups as medium. Teachers reported that they felt their students were not ready for a structured environment and that reading, writing, and mathematics readiness skills should be emphasized.

Support can also be evidenced in the extensive Chapter One enrollment of the target group. Twelve students from the group of twenty-seven in the writer's class received additional instruction through this program. All of the students in the target group participated in the Chapter One program.

At the beginning of the practicum experience the objective was stated as follows: Over a period of 10 weeks seven of the nine students participating in the practicum activities will increase their overall achievement by ten points measured by the Brigance Test (Appendix B:35).

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

Burns and others (1987) stated in a Collection of Readings on Multicultural Learning in Early Childhood Education that students who come from culturally different homes are usually not prepared for programs used in schools. Students from culturally different homes usually have difficulty interacting with other students and have difficulty controlling their behavior. These students may be unfamiliar with school equipment such as pencils, papers, desks, and chairs. The most difficult factor is the lack or difference in language these students bring to school. Burns states that their language is inadequate for communication or their language patterns are radically different from those patterns expected in school.

These students lack background information and experiences which are necessary in a traditional school setting. Baker (1983), cited in the Collection of Readings by Kevin Swick, states that a multicultural education should begin with a child's earliest

experiences at school. Students should be aware that everyone is different and that many cultures exist. Instruction should include positive experiences enhancing positive self esteem. Baker suggests a two part model for instruction for the culturally different student. Part one of the program deal with diversities as related to individuals. Part two includes the study of the different ethnic groups in the United States and their contribution to society. The classroom should also reflect a commitment to multicultural education.

Berney and Barrera (1990) reported on the success of Project MASTER. Project MASTER used a holistic approach to language development. Teaching strategies implemented during the project phase included integration of all subject areas with the English language learning through science projects. By using a hands-on approach to science, students developed English language along with computer and critical thinking skills. The project developed curriculum materials with science topics within the context of bilingual education. It also engaged in the training of bilingual teachers at project sites and in community projects. The objectives in English as a Second Language (ESOL) were achieved and were measured by the

Language Assessment Battery. The mathematics objectives were achieved and measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Test in Mathematics. The science objectives were not assessed because there was not an appropriate instrument. The success of Project MASTER was its holistic approach but also its active part in providing resources and coordinating services for the students through agencies and institutions.

The author provided the following recommendation:

Dedicate such resources as are possible to the capacity building plan for bilingual teachers to provide the expertise necessary for the incorporation of the project's holistic methodology into the regular school program. (Berney and Barrera, 1990:6).

The question of how to teach beginning reading has had many answers, from the sight word approach to complete phonics instruction. Research in the field has continued, focusing on the reading process as a whole. Research by Goodman and others, cited in Looby and Turner, (1987) revealed an awareness of the relationship of language development and reading achievement.

A more difficult problem for beginning reading instruction is presented when the student is learning English as a second language (ESOL). Students who come from homes in which a language other than English is

predominant scored at least 20 points lower in reading than their classmates in a National Assessment of Educational Progress Survey (Newsnotes, 1986). ESOL programs have usually included a basal reader. Recently, the whole language approach has been incorporated in ESOL programs and has been reported as successful (Corey, 1987; Heald-Taylor, 1986; Rupp, 1986).

Chamot and O'Malley, cited in Sutton, (1989) stated that Limited English Proficient (LEP) students may appear to have fluency in English but may struggle to communicate when faced with academic tasks that are decontextualized and cognitively demanding.

Reading research over the past 15 years has examined the process of reading. It has been determined that reading is an active process whereby the reader makes predictions using language cues. The reader confirmed these predictions and integrated what was read into his/her world (Rupp, 1986). Learning to read is similar to language acquisition in that the learner is an active participant who learns by imitating what he/she sees and hears. Reading becomes part of a cycle in which listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the components.

Basal readers approach reading as a result of direct instruction with the learner being passive. Basals have improved over the years offering quality literature (Cassady, 1988, Farr, 1988), but continue to approach reading as a part to whole experience. This separation of skill instruction resulted in workbook pages and ditto masters that suggest erroneously that development can be reduced to learning discrete skills (Farr, 1988).

The whole language premise is that the child learns from whole to part through purposeful communication (Brand, 1989). It uses the experience the child brings to school and those created in school as the basis for instruction. This approach integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

Sutton explained that a conceptual framework must exist in order for the reader to comprehend the material. Smith and Thonis, cited in Sutton, (1989) see reading as a multifaceted developmental process in which the successful student learns to make connections that link language, print, and thought.

Sutton delineated strategies for the three areas of reading instruction: (1) Word recognition--label items, write directions, using language experience

activities and develop a sight vocabulary; (2) Language competence--exposure to whole language activities that integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing and purposeful communication; (3) Expanding conceptual framework--exposing students to learning different aspects of new culture. Research indicated that readers are better able to understand and remember print selections that reflect their cultural background as stated by Anderson and Barnitz, cited in Sutton, (1989). Sutton also included introducing reading strategies to students.

Culture and language play a vital role in the students readiness to learn. Cognitive development must also be considered. These students are not ready to learn in a structured environment by virtue of their intellectual development, physical development, and learning styles.

Some research has suggested that play is a means of learning. Play and game-like situations make learning a relevant experience. Play presents a non-threatening environment in which a child can learn not only concepts, but about himself and others. A child can explore without fear or embarrassment. Sutton states that some researchers see language and

learning through play as practice for language. Yet other research suggests that children play with levels of language as they acquire them.

Yawkey and Villarreal (1989) described the role of formal schooling as one in which culturally and linguistically different children are socialized into mainstream America; they also point out the current trend of bilingual-bicultural education in the school's programs.

The authors stated that child care programs are ideal places for children to expand their native language while at the same time acquire the mastery of English. The child care provider must remember to respect and accept that culture which the child brings with him to school. Acceptance in this form allows the child to see himself in a positive way. Instructional techniques must also accommodate the multicultural student.

Pretend play situations provide an excellent means by which children can expand their vocabulary. Yawkey and Villarreal stated that pretend play requires children to change themselves into other people, objects, and situations. It removes threat, doubt, or possible embarrassment. Play is a natural and

spontaneous activity that occurs in all young children and can be found in early education programs.

Pretend play can be used as a base for oral language development with the following extension techniques as prescribed by Yawkey and Villarreal: questioning, attention to nonvisual stimuli, memory development, directed dialogue, and self monitoring of verbal responses.

Documentation has suggested that instructional play situations and whole language activities for bicultural-bilingual children can be a successful approach to teaching ESOL children in kindergarten. Therefore, a centers approach to instruction in an ESOL kindergarten classroom should be a more efficient and effective mode of instruction than a structured approach to instruction.

CHAPTER III

Method

Based on the review of the literature, conferences with teachers and administrators, and visitations to various other kindergarten classrooms, the writer developed various solution strategies implemented during this practicum. The writer considered cognitive and fine-motor development stages of the students in the target group. Incorporated into the solution strategies were the mandated objectives, critical thinking skills, and curriculum materials in the ESOL kindergarten program. Learning styles were also addressed when formulating solution strategies. Just as the students in the target group enter kindergarten with cultural differences, they also came to school with different learning styles. Some students learn best through a visual approach and some through manipulative material and tactile experiences. Still others learn most efficiently through an auditory method. These strategies were used in addition to the Heath Reading Series and the Harcourt, Brace and

Jovanovich Math Series. These textbooks were the state adopted books used in the school where this practicum will take place. This practicum was implemented for 10 weeks.

After administering the pretest, four instructional groups were formed. Each group consisted of six to eight students. These four groups worked independently in centers. The activities at the Centers Table were explained at the beginning of the implementation period. The activities were changed according to the topics being studied in class. The activities for the Blue Center and the Yellow Center were explained on a daily basis.

The centers were comprised of four main areas: Yellow Center, Blue Center, Orange Center and the Centers Table (Appendix C:37 and Appendix D:39).

The Yellow Center was where students completed the writing assignments for the day. Each group had a folder labelled with the group's name and logo. Inside the folder, the students found their assignments. The more advanced group had handwriting paper. The intermediate groups had handwriting paper with tracing assignments where necessary. The last group had newsprint and early kindergarten handwriting paper with

tracing assignments where necessary. The lesson's objective was the same for everyone, but the completion process is different. As each student progressed, the assignments became more challenging.

The Blue Center reinforced concepts related to the day's reading assignment. As in the Yellow Center, each group had a folder with the name and group's logo. Each folder had the activity to be completed. Activities included completing pages from the skillpad book, a cut and paste activity or a manipulative game to be played alone or in groups of two. Again, the objective was the same, but the process differed from group to group.

The Orange Center was the teacher directed instructional center. At this center, students worked with the teacher on the day's lesson. The teacher directed activity included completing a page from the pupil workbook, games, manipulatives, and verbal development activities. The activities were modified from group to group.

The Centers Table was to be an independent work area. When the student arrived at the Centers Table, he was to locate his name on a chart. This chart indicated which independent area or center he was to attend

that day. Each center was coded with a symbol on the chart and then the symbol was repeated at the center for location purposes. The centers were rotated on the chart daily so that each student had an opportunity to visit all the centers within six to eight days.

There were eight centers:

Science Fun was where students were able to work with balance scales, magnifying glass, rock collections and other science related materials. Science books, National Geographic magazines and maps were located at the science center for student use.

The Math Center was located next to the Science Fun Area. Students had the opportunity to play math games. The games were developed in conjunction with the math objectives. Manipulative material was provided for further development of math concepts and skills. Materials such as cubes, parquetry blocks, and attribute blocks provided opportunities for students to explore math concepts while participating in a play situation.

The Listening Station offered students opportunities to listen to English while following the story in a book. The stories were from the Heath

Reading Series. Classic stories such as Cinderella and Snow White were included for further exposure to language. Students also listened to a variety of poems, songs, and nursery rhymes at the listening station.

Pre-writing Center. Since kindergarten students need to develop fine motor skills as a prerequisite for writing, a pre-writing center was developed. Activities such as lacing, clay, tearing paper, cutting, peg board games and shape stencils provided the student with readiness skills. Games that develop left to right, top to bottom and other handwriting vocabulary were part of this center. This enabled the student to comprehend oral directions for handwriting assignments.

Pre-reading Center. Along with the pre-writing, there was a Pre-reading Center. This center was dedicated to helping each student develop reading readiness skills that are necessary to begin a formal reading program. Games in this center included parquetry puzzles, sequencing story cards, figure ground activity cards, visual memory games, two and three block designs. These games developed eye muscle

coordination, visual discrimination skills, and provided a foundation for reading.

Art Center. This center provided an area where students experience a variety of mediums to create something of their own. Students were encouraged to experiment with paints, brushes, crayons and paper. Students were also responsible for maintaining the work area neat and clean for the next student to enjoy.

Reading Corner. A soft comfortable chair, a pillow on the floor and a variety of library books ranging in topics made up the Reading Corner. This center allowed students to read for the pleasure of reading. It also exposed them to a wide range of topics and book topics, developing an interest in books.

Computer Center. This center provided students an opportunity to become acquainted with computer skills while learning. Software was in game form concentrating on letter identification and math concepts.

The writer incorporated critical thinking activities throughout the instructional process. Using the "Building Thinking Skills" book from Midwest

Publications as a guide, students were encouraged to hypothesize and think in terms of "what if?"

The writer used various cooperative learning activities. Students worked in groups of two to three at appropriate times. Given a task, students worked together to accomplish it. Each student contributed to the final product. Cooperative learning activities were used two to three times a week.

ESOL strategies were incorporated. A variety of illustrations, posters, and objects were brought into the classroom so that students can see as well as hear the concepts. The ESOL technique of repetition was also used. Each day students referred to the alphabet chart, said the name of the letter, its phonetic sound, and identified the picture above the letter. Also, the oral language techniques of questioning, attention to nonvisual stimuli, memory development, directed dialogue, and self-monitoring of verbal responses as described by Yawkey and Villarreal (1979) were employed.

Uninterrupted sustained silent reading was used everyday for a period of ten to fifteen minutes. Before morning instruction began, a book was read to the students in English. The book was from the

reading series or from the library. Students were encouraged to bring in their own books from home to be read in class. This strategy further exposed the students to the new language in an enjoyable and non-threatening way. Emphasis was made on the printed word, allowing for a transfer from spoken word to the printed word.

The students had homework assignments five days a week for about 15 minutes. Homework assignments for Monday through Thursday nights included a page of reading or a page of mathematics. The assignments were a reinforcement and practice of the objectives covered in class. Students were encouraged to explain to their parents the directions for the homework. This technique fostered memory development and oral language skills. Friday night homework assignments consisted of reading a book. Parents were encouraged to participate in having their children "read" to them and having the parents read to their students. Students brought to class the book used for homework on Monday morning. The books were shared and then collected and placed in the library center for all students to enjoy.

Evaluation of weekly objectives were completed on the last day of the school week. The tests included a

combination of written response as well as oral response to individual questions. This two part evaluation was done to ascertain that each student's progress was valid. Students receiving a grade of E for excellent or S for satisfactory continued on to the next objective. Those students receiving a grade of N for needs improvement received remedial instruction at the appropriate center.

As John Dewey once said, "we learn by doing." Concrete experiences provided a base not only for memory but for relevant learning. The writer used cooking activities as a strategy. Cooking was a versatile activity that was used to achieve several objectives. Cooking provided opportunities for cognitive development; introduction to science; reading to follow directions; language development; and mathematics skills. It provided an environment for social development, importance of taking turns and sharing, and an illustration of cultural differences among ethnic groups in food preparation. It also developed a positive self-image as the student was successful in completing the project. Cooking offered the students an opportunity to be involved in creating something "real." Cooking activities took students

from abstract concepts to relevant concrete experiences.

Communication between parent and school was essential to the student's progress. Upon the completion of each workbook, the letter at the end of the pupil workbook was sent home. The letter explained what was covered in the workbook. The writer wrote additional comments about the student's achievement of the skills in the workbook. This indicated to the parents in what areas they can help their children become better students. Also, a form letter was sent home each Friday to inform the parent what the student received in each subject area. This letter was signed by the parent and returned.

Finally, the Assertive Discipline Plan was used as the classroom management program. The program outlined the rules of the classroom, the rewards for following them and the consequences for not following the rules. A letter to explain assertive discipline was sent home for parents to read with their children. Students also participated in a discussion explaining the plan. Focusing on positive behaviors created an environment that was comfortable and conducive to learning.

CHAPTER IV

Results

The strategies outlined for the implementation period were be incorporated into an ESOL self-contained kindergarten classroom for a period of 10 weeks. At the conclusion of the implementation period, students were posttested using the pretest instrument. The objective was that a minimum of seven students out of the nine in the target group would increase their overall achievement by a minimum of ten points as measured by the Brigance Test (Appendix E:41).

The pretest was administered in Spanish. At the conclusion of the implementation period, all nine students in the target group were tested with the Brigance Test. The posttesting was administered in English, using Spanish as needed for clarification purposes. The mean pretest score was 42.9. The mean posttest score was 88.8. All students met the minimum objective of increasing his/her score by at least ten points.

As was stated earlier, the students in the target group often moved from school to school because of

economic reasons. Eight of the students in the target group remained enrolled in the school. One student moved to Nicaragua for three weeks and returned. Nevertheless, her scores improved.

The target group was able to be tested mostly in English. The test questions were asked in English and understood. Five of the students in the target group were able to answer in English. Three of the students used a combination of English and Spanish to respond to the test questions. One student was not able to answer any portion in English. All posttests were completed in one 20 to 25 minute sitting.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

Kindergarten is a great challenge to student and teacher alike. Students are faced with the pressures of a structured curriculum and in the case of this practicum, learning the English language. Teachers need to accommodate instruction to fit the needs of the students. Instruction should be carried out in a relaxed and enriched environment. ESOL kindergarten students need to be instructed in a way that will address their short attention span and maintain their interest level. It is of utmost importance to do so in a way that will challenge without frustration or anxiety. Learning needs to be pleasurable and fun.

A centers approach to ESOL kindergarten instruction helped these students learn efficiently and effectively. Centers provided the change of activities needed to maintain the student's interest level. Centers also provided opportunities for play situations. In play situations students learn in a relaxed and non-threatening environment. Learning can

occur on an individual basis or in a cooperative setting. Students enjoy the daily routines in which they can work at their own pace. Other activities in this practicum, such as cooking and cooperative learning sessions, provided background experiences needed to foster language development. These activities also created relevant situations from which students are able to build for future learning.

Although the centers approach in this practicum was implemented in an ESOL kindergarten classroom, it can be appropriate and effective at other grade levels provided the activities are adapted. Centers may include multiplication and division flashcards, newspapers, magazines, journals, charts and graphs, and other materials pertinent to current topics and student progress.

The writer shared these practicum strategies and results with other kindergarten teachers at grade level meetings. Modifications and recommendations for improvement were also discussed. It is hoped that these strategies and others developed through these discussions will improve the ESOL kindergarten program.

Reference List

- Berney, Toni D., and M. Barrera. "Language Development Through Holistic Learning." ERIC Reports, 1990. ERIC ED 319 253.
- Brand, S. (1989). "Learning Through Meaning." Academic Therapy, 24, 305-313.
- Cassady, J. (1988). "Beginning Reading With Big Books." Childhood Education, 65, 18-23.
- Corey, K. "A Whole Language Program for Refugee Children." ERIC Documentation Reproduction Service. ERIC ED 290 331.
- Farr, R. (1988). "A Place for Basal Readers Under the Whole Language Umbrella." Educational Leadership, 46, 86.
- Goodman, K. (1987). "Taking Charge of Your Own Teaching." Learning 87, 16, 63-65.
- Heald-Taylor, G. "Whole Language Strategies for ESL Students, Language and Literacy Series." ERIC Documentation Reproduction Service. ERIC ED 280-287.
- Lindberg, Lucile, and R. Swedlow. Young Children, Exploring and Learning, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1985.
- Looby, T. and J. Turner. "Improved Reading Achievement of Sixth Grade Students When Using a Whole Language Approach in Conjunction with a Basal Reading Program." ERIC Documentation Reproduction Service. ERIC ED 290 124.
- Newsnotes. (1986). "Non-English-Speaking Students Need More Help in Reading: NAEP." Phi Delta Kappa, 67, 543-544.
- Rupp, J. "Whole Language in the Elementary ESL Classroom." ERIC Document Reproduction Service. ERIC ED 273-121.

Slaughter, H. (1988). "Indirect and Direct Teaching in a Whole Language Program." The Reading Teacher, 42, 30-34.

Sutton, Christine. (May 1989). "Helping the Non-native English Speaker with Reading." Reading Teacher, 42, 9, 684-688.

Swick, Kevin J., Ed. "Readings on Multicultural Learning in Early Childhood Education." ERIC Reports, 1987. ERIC ED 209 863.

Yawkey, Thomas Daniels, and Beatrice Villarreal. "Language Learning Through Pretend Play in Young Bilingual-Bicultural Children," 1979. ERIC ED 179 298.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
Informal Pre-Implementation Survey

APPENDIX A

Informal Pre-Implementation Survey

Based on the Brigance Screen Test scores, would you rate your student's overall performance on the test as:

High	(95-110)
Medium	(80-94)
Low	(below 80)

Teacher	1	Medium
	2	Medium
	3	Low
	4	Low
	5	Low
	6	Low
	7	Low

APPENDIX B
Pre/Post Test Instrument

KINDERGARTEN Pupil Data Sheet for the BRIGANCE® K & 1 SCREEN



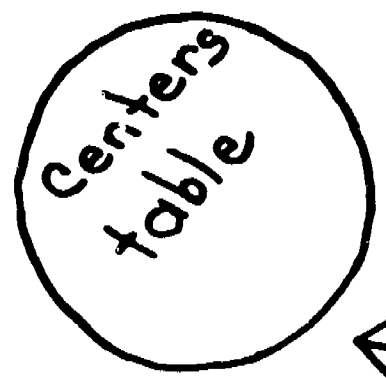
A. Student's Name _____ Date of Screening _____ Year _____ Month _____ Day _____ School/Program _____
 Parents/Guardian _____ Birthdate _____ Teacher _____
 Address _____ Age _____ Assessor _____

B. BASIC SCREENING ASSESSMENTS			C. SCORING		
Page	Assessment Number	Skill (Circle the skill for each correct response and make notes as appropriate.)	Number of Correct Responses	Point Value	Student's Score
2	1	Personal Data Response: Verbally gives: 1 first name 2 full name 3 age 4 address (street or mail) 5 birthdate (month and day)	x	2 points each	/10
3	2	Color Recognition: Identifies and names the colors: 1 red 2 blue 3 green 4 yellow 5 orange 6 purple 7 brown 8 black 9 pink 10 gray	x	1 point each	/10
5	3	Picture Vocabulary: Recognizes and names picture of 1 dog 2 cat 3 key 4 girl 5 boy 6 airplane 7 apple 8 leaf 9 cup 10 car	x	1 point each	/10
6	4A	Visual Discrimination: Visually discriminates which one of four symbols is different 1 O 2 □ 3 O 4 O 5 O 6 O 7 I 8 P 9 V 10 X	x	1 point each	/10
8	5	Visual-Motor Skills: Copies 1 O 2 - 3 + 4 □ 5 Δ	x	2 pts ea	/10
9	6	Gross Motor Skills: 1 Hops 2 hops on one foot 2 Hops 2 hops on either foot. 3 Stands on one foot momentarily. 4 Stands on either foot momentarily. 5 Stands on one foot for 5 seconds 6 Stands on either foot for 5 secs 7. Walks forward heel-and-toe 4 steps. 8. Walks backward toe-and-heel 4 steps. 9. Stands on one foot momentarily with eyes closed 10. Stands on either foot momentarily with eyes closed	x	1 point each	/10
12	8	Role Counting: Counts by rote to. (Circle all numerals prior to the first error.) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	x	5 point each	/5
13	9	Identification of Body Parts: Identifies by pointing or touching 1 chin 2 fingernails 3 heel 4 elbow 5 ankle 6 shoulder 7 jaw 8 hips 9 wrist 10 waist	x	5 point each	/5
15	11	Follows Verbal Directions: Listens to, remembers, and follows 1. one-step direction 2. two-step direction	x	25 points each	/5
17	12	Numeral Comprehension: Matches quantity with numerals: 2 1 3 5	x	2 pts ea	/10
21	15	Prints Personal Data: Prints first name. Reversals: Yes _____ No _____	x	5 points	/5
22	16	Syntax and Fluency: 1. Speech is understandable. 2. Speaks in complete sentences	x	5 pts ea	/10
D. OBSERVATIONS: 1 Handedness Right _____ Left _____ Uncertain _____ 2 Pencil grasp Correct _____ Incorrect _____ 3 Maintained paper in the proper position when writing Yes _____ No _____ 4 Record other observations below or on the back. _____ _____ _____			E. SUMMARY: (Compared to other students included in this screening) 1 this student scored: _____ Lower _____ Average _____ Higher _____ 2 this student's age is: _____ Younger _____ Average _____ Older _____ 3 the teacher rates this student: _____ Lower _____ Average _____ Higher _____ 4 the assessor rates this student: _____ Lower _____ Average _____ Higher _____		
F. RECOMMENDATIONS: Place in: Low _____ Average _____ High _____ Preschool _____ Kindergarten _____ Kindergarten _____ Kindergarten _____ Other (Indicate.) _____ Refer for. (Indicate if needed.) _____			Total Score /100		

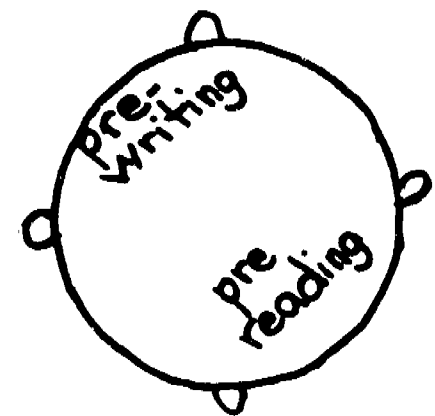
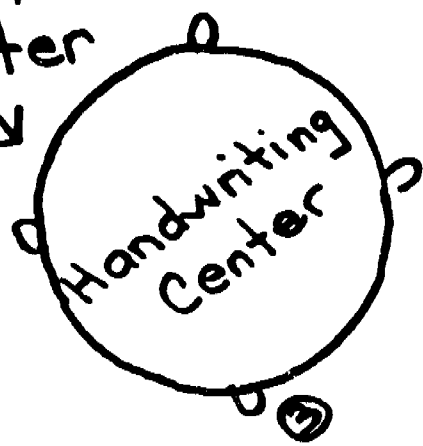
APPENDIX C
Floor Plan of Classroom

Centers

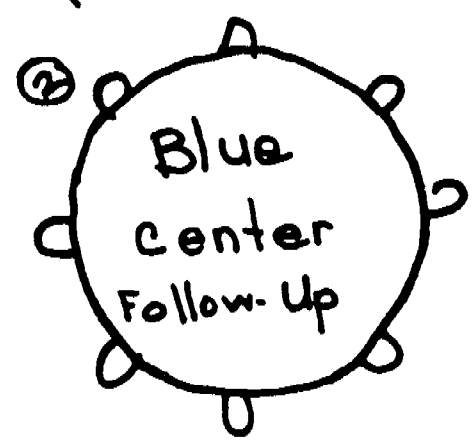
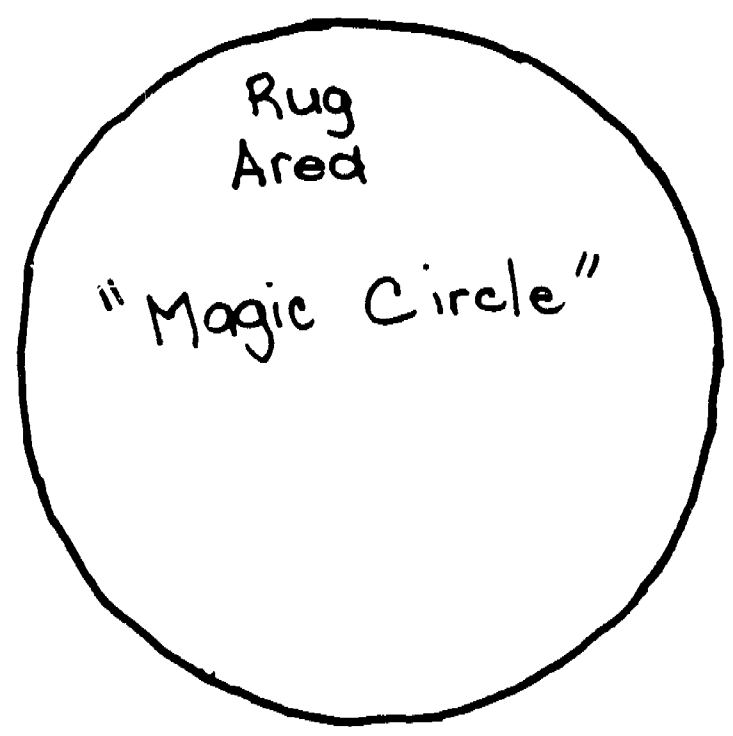
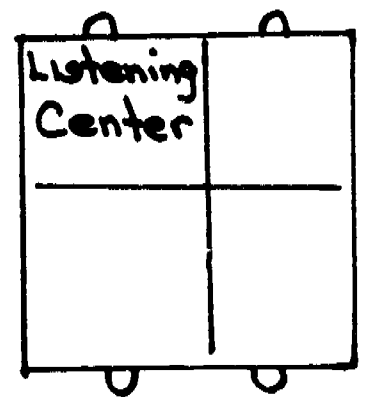
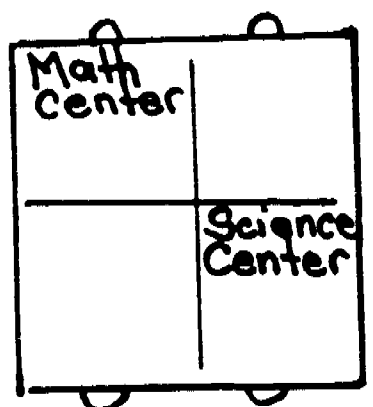
Shelves



Yellow Center



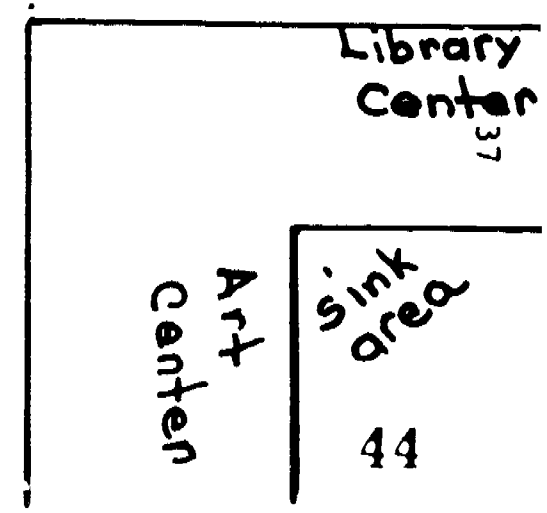
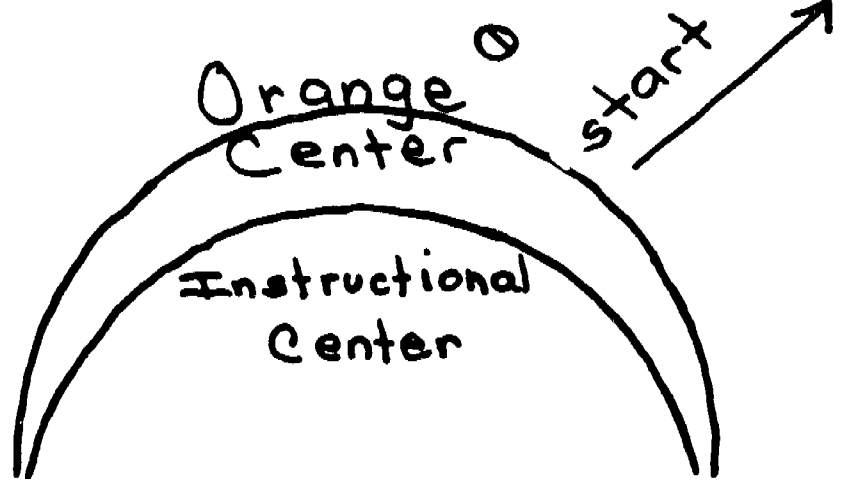
computer center



shelves

Entrance to classroom

File Cabinet



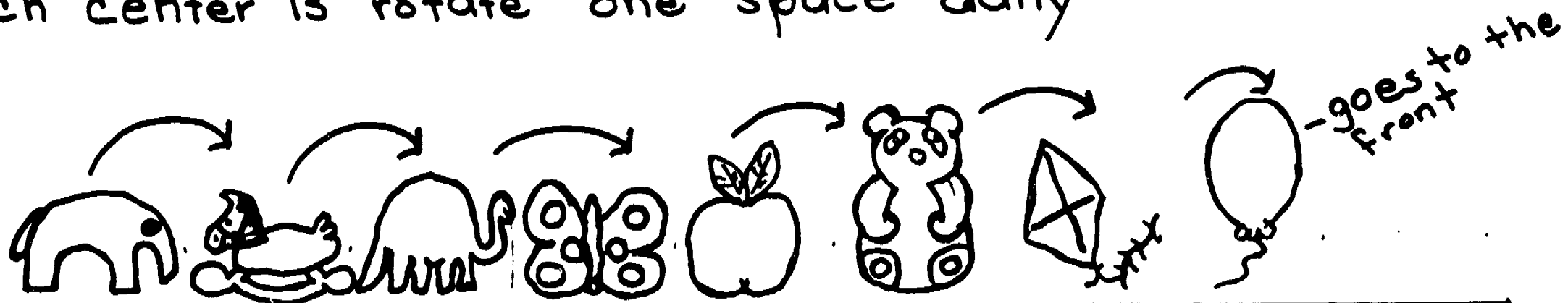
APPENDIX D
Sample Centers Chart

Sample Centers Chart

Each row is a reading group

Each group is color coded

Each center is rotate one space daily



Mary	Joe	Cathy	Andy	Jose	Renato	Claudia	Yvette	Extra centers in case of new students
Chris	John	Cindy	Micky	Alex	Marcel	Robert	Andres	
Crystal	Julio	Susy	Juan	Michael	Maria	Mady	Liz	
Ralph	Neyda	Mary	Iliana	Albert	Theo	Carl	Natalie	

APPENDIX E
Comparison of Pre/Post Test Scores

APPENDIX E
Comparison of Pre/Post Test Scores

Student	Scores	
	Pre	Post
A	42	93.5
B	72.5	90
C	56.5	89
D	60	91.5
E	74.5	98
F	26	82.5
G	30.5	71.5
H	42.5	93
I	38.5	90.5